



Borough of Dabentry



A N N U A L R E P O R T

O F T H E

M E D I C A L O F F I C E R

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H E A L T H

F O R T H E

Y E A R 1 9 5 0

ARTHUR LUCAS
L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.

<https://archive.org/details/b29152690>

To the Mayor, Aldermen and Councillors of the Borough.

Your Worship, Mrs. F. Trinder and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present the Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health and that of your Sanitary Inspector for your Borough for 1950.

The statistics generally agree with those of England and Wales and there have been no deaths from infectious disease. It is a pity that when the Council supported the Clean Food Campaign that so few of the general public took any interest in the meeting that was held to illustrate the causes and effects of lack of cleanliness in food preparation and handling.

As Dental Clinics will be held periodically in the Borough it is hoped that the attention to school childrens' teeth and that of mothers will be improved.

The Housing programme is going ahead but as in every part of the country not nearly fast enough to cope with the need. How great an advance there would be if the money spent on armaments could be spent in housing, and what a relief to those living in overcrowded and sub-standard conditions.

I wish to express my thanks to your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Coupe, and to all members of the Public Health Committee for their help during the past year.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient Servant,

ARTHUR LUCAS,
Medical Officer of Health.

B O R O U G H O F D A V E N T R Y .

Members of the Public Health Committee:

Alderman D.C. Arnall (Chairman), Councillor T.R. Webb (Mayor)
Alderman R.J. Willoughby, Councillors: Mrs. F. Trinder
L.B. Butcher, J.C. DeFreyne, R. Falconer, H.W.C. Richardson
and J.T. Thomas.

Public Health Officers of the Local Authority:

Arthur Lucas, L.R.C.P., L.R.C.S., D.P.H.,
also holds the appointment of

Medical Officer of Health Rural District of Daventry,
Medical Officer of Health Brackley Borough,
Medical Officer of Health Brackley Rural District Council,
Assistant County Medical Officer of Health,
Assistant County Medical Officer for Schools.

Borough Sanitary Inspector:

W. Coupe, M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.

Certified Inspector of Meat and Foods.
Mr. Coupe is also Shops Acts Inspector and Petroleum Officer.

SUMMARY OF VITAL STATISTICS, 1950..

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	3,633
Population	...	...	...	...	4,240
Number of Separate Dwellings	...	...	...	...	1,169
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	£26,763
Products of a Penny Rate	...	...	...	...	£105/14/3
Live Births - Total 58 - Rate per 1,000 of Population	...	...	...	...	13.6
Still Births	...	...	...	...	1
Maternal Mortality	...	...	...	...	Nil
Infantile Mortality - Total 5 - Death Rate per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	...	89.6
Death from Measles	...	...	...	...	Nil
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	Nil
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	...	...	...	...	1

LIVE BIRTHS

	Total	Male	Female	Rate E. & W.
Legitimate	...	26	30	13.6 15.8
Illegitimate	...	2	Nil	
	58	28	30	

STILL BIRTHS

	Total	Male	Female	Rate E. & W.
Legitimate	...	1	1	0.23 0.37
Illegitimate	...			

	Total	Male	Female	Rate E. & W.
<u>DEATHS</u> (all causes)	53	27	26	12.4 11.6
Death from Puerperal Causes	-	Nil	-	

INFANTILE MORTALITY (Rate per 1,000 live births):-

	Total	Male	Female	Rate E. & W.
Legitimate	...	5	2	89.6 29.8
Illegitimate	...	Nil	Nil	
	5	2	3	

DEATHS FROM INFECTIOUS DISEASES:-

Measles	...	Nil
Whooping Cough	...	Nil
Diarrhoea - under 1 year		Nil

CAUSES OF DEATH, 1950.

CAUSES	Male	Female	Total
Cancer of Buccal Cavity, Oesophagus and Uterus	0	1	1
Cancer of Stomach and Duodenum	0	1	1
Cancer of all other sites	4	3	7
Diabetes	1	0	1
Intra-Cranial Vascular Lesions	2	1	3
Coronary Disease	2	2	4
Heart Disease	4	6	10
Other disease of Circulatory System	1	0	1
Bronchitis	2	2	4
Pneumonia	1	1	2
Nephritis	1	0	1
Congenital Malformation, birth injury and infantile diseases	1	1	2
Suicide	2	0	2
All other causes	4	8	12
Leukaemia	1	0	1
Hyperplasia of Prostate	1	0	1
ALL CAUSES	27	26	53

SECTION A

NATURAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS

AREA. The area consists of central core of the old town with a deep belt of rural land.

As the Council's housing reaches out into the surrounding area it leaves behind, patches of worn out dwellings on sites which tend to become difficult to treat in a wholesome fashion.

These decaying eyesores will have to be re-developed before the full benefit of re-housing becomes apparent in the Borough.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS. The area is lacking in communal facilities often to a bewildering degree.

Some post-war attempts to provide certain types of sports fields, or buildings designed to cater for recreation, hobbies and cultural activities, have been made. The results are unpromising so that it would appear that such projects as swimming-baths, and Community Centres must be long delayed.

There is however the compensation that the townsfolk still retain unspoilt their intimate contact with the life of the rural communities to their mutual benefit.

POPULATION. The population stands at 4240. The increase again being attributable to a normal gain of births over deaths.

DEATHS. The deaths attributable to the Borough totalled 53 after correction. The rate of 12.4 per 1,000 comparing with the rate for England and Wales of 11.6.

BIRTHS. The number of live births was 58. The rate per 1,000 of population being 15.8 a lower rate which follows the general trend.

STILLBIRTHS. The number of stillbirths was 1 giving a rate of 0.23 per 1,000.

ILLEGITIMATE BIRTHS. There were 2 illegitimate births during the year.

MATERNAL MORTALITY. There were no maternal deaths in the district during the year.

INFANT MORTALITY. The number of deaths of children under the age of 1 year was 5 giving a death rate for 1,000 live births of 89.6. The figures reflect the state of health of the infant population, and are large enough to cause concern. The rate for England and Wales was 29.8.

SECTION B

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICE

The Emergency Public Health Laboratory Service is available for public and private practitioners' use. It is used for examination of materials and specimens. Telephone, Northampton 347.

DIPHTHERIA ANTI-TOXIN

Supplies of diphtheria anti-toxin can be obtained by any general practitioner from the area Public Health Laboratory.

AMBULANCE SERVICE

Infectious cases are removed as necessary by arrangement with the Northampton Borough Authorities. Telephone, Northampton 1402.

The St. John Ambulance Brigade service is maintained under contract with the Hospital Authorities and is entirely free. No separate figures are available for the Borough Area as the centre serves the surrounding rural area.

A rota of drivers is on call day and night. Telephone, Daventry 16 by day, and Daventry 179, or Police, by night.

Hon. Secretary: Mr. Maynard Green, High Street, Daventry. Telephone No.: Daventry 86.

TREATMENT CENTRES AND CLINICS

The Infant Welfare Clinic is held on the first and third Fridays in each month in the Abbey Buildings, and an Ante-Natal Clinic is held at the same time.

The County Authorities are considering the provision of a Dental Clinic for the area and lack of a suitable building is holding up the provision of this very needy service.

TUBERCULOSIS CARE COMMITTEE

The Care Committee continues to serve the Borough and the surrounding Rural District and a certain amount of aid is given necessitous cases. The difficulty of arranging regular visits to patients is becoming apparent.

NURSING IN THE HOME

The County Council run a complete Nursing Service within the area and Home Helps are also on call in connection with the infirm or chronic cases treated at home. Several elderly bedridden cases are outstanding examples of the need for fuller liaison between the Medical and Welfare Departments.

SECTION C

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT

Report of W. Coupe, M.S.I., C.R.S.I.,
Borough Sanitary Inspector

WATER SUPPLY

With the severing of control of water supply from the Council, the benefits of centralisation and co-ordination may be balanced against the loss of local interest.

On one hand, handicapped as we were by antiquated and inadequate byelaws the standards in water distribution was deplorably low. From observations it was apparent that nearly as much water was being lost from faulty pipes and apparatus as was being legitimately used. In a good many cases services to houses long since demolished can be traced as still being alive and actually connected to the town mains.

It is to be expected that a competent divisional Water Engineer, armed with adequate safe-guarding powers will be installed to bring the town's supply to a more rational pitch of efficiency. Attention to the painful question of supplying a softer water supply is imperative.

The basic requirement of a separate supply of wholesome water to each house is being met by informal and statutory action.

DRAINAGE, SEWERAGE & SEWAGE DISPOSAL

As is to be expected, a town which is hampered by a low rate income, cannot hope to enjoy the amenities of up-to-date communities.

There is however a stage when the cheese paring becomes merely a fetish and in no case is this more obvious than when considering the disposal of the town's wastes. Since the War we have had certain developments of land projected and accomplished with all the piecemeal and unhygienic waste of individual septic tanks to each and every house. When thousands of pounds and untold man-hours of valuable building labour and materials have been expended, on these abortions, the sewer extensions have been laid and the whole of the works, so expensively produced, have been scrapped.

Whilst this culpable waste has been perpetrated, your Inspector has had the greatest difficulty in obtaining labour and materials for the re-organisation of defective drainage works, or the completion of essential repairs to the older houses of the town.

A greater measure of planned and intelligent co-ordination of effort is indicated.

The reconditioning of houses and business premises is proceeding and will eventually lead to overloading of the Council's sewerage works.

DISINFECTION

Terminal disinfection following certain Infectious Diseases is still practised.

DISINFESTATION

Each year, less domestic infestations occur as far as the non-flying pests are concerned.

The fly peril remains the hard core of the problem in food and domestic premises. Environmental hygiene coupled with use of the newer sprays should be capable of controlling this menace.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS

The yearly licences are issued conditionally upon retaining a standard of cleanliness and amenity.

RODENT CONTROL

Sewers are check baited twice yearly and to date have been free from serious infestation.

The Sewage works and tip remain as problems. In both cases lack of control of tipping attracts a reservoir of rodents difficult to eradicate and providing a source of supply for adjoining premises.

Complaints are investigated and an operative is being trained for the routine work of eradication. The casual labour available is difficult to handle and the sharing of a full time operative with the adjoining Council might be worth while.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

The findings of the team investigating the incidence of pulmonary tuberculosis within the boot and shoe trade are inconclusive and this negative result is in some measure reassuring.

The trade locally is carried out in hygienic surroundings.

SCAVENGING

The fortnightly collection of refuse is inadequate. It is hoped in the near future to remedy this.

The replacement of bins continues to be a pressing problem and no concerted effort has yet been made to replace insanitary bins.

The refuse tip is not altogether satisfactory as to a great extent the tipping is crude. The difficulties associated with labour are acute.

PETROLEUM REGISTRATIONS continue at 13.

SCHOOLS

It has now been ascertained that a new school is projected to replace the County Modern School and to provide for the continuous educational needs of the elder children. The old school with its cramped surroundings has no place in a modern age.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937

No cases were referred to the authority by His Majesty's Inspector of Factories.

The number of factories registered is 51.

Prescribed particulars on the administration of the Factories Act, 1937.

PART I OF THE ACT

1. INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by the Sanitary Inspector.

Premises	M./c line No. 2	Number on Register (3)	Inspections (4)	Written Notices (5)	Occupiers prosecuted (6)	M/c line No. (7)
(i) Factories, in Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6	1	13	14	2	-	1
(ii) Factories not included in (i)	2	34	28	2	-	2
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced	3	4	5	-	-	3
TOTAL ...		51	47	4	-	

2. CASES IN WHICH DEFECTS WERE FOUND.

(If defects are discovered at the premises on two, three or more separate occasions, they should be reckoned as two, three or more "cases").

Particulars (1)	M/c line No. (2)	Found (3)	Remedied (4)	To H.M. Inspector (5)	By H.M. Inspector (6)	Number of prosecutions (7)	M/c line No. (8)
Want of cleanliness (S.1.)	4	2	2	-	-	-	4
Overcrowding (S.2.) ...	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
Unreasonable temperature (S.3.)	6	-	-	-	-	-	6
Inadequate ventilation (S.4.)	7	-	-	-	-	-	7
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6.) ...	8	-	-	-	-	-	8
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7.)							
(a) Insufficient ...	9	3	3	-	1	-	9
(b) Unsuitable or defective ...	10	1	1	-	-	-	10
(c) Not separate for sexes ...	11	-	-	-	-	-	11
Other offences against the Act	12	-	-	-	-	-	12
TOTAL ...	60	6	6	-	1	-	60

SECTION D

HOUSING

The alternative of re-housing or re-conditioning is the choice which your Inspector often faces in the course of his daily duties. As the new houses are erected, the older premises lose their value as dwellings.

As each allocation is completed a few of the worst cases are pruned out. Thus it is that since the War it has been found that we have dealt with over 20 houses by actual demolition. There are however at least that number condemned but remaining occupied.

In addition over 250 houses have been re-conditioned in the six years since the War. This work coupled with the 120 dwellings erected by the Authority has made great strides towards remedying the acute housing conditions which faced us after the War.

The basic re-conditioning is gaining momentum encouraged by the Council's decision to grant aid to owners desirous of converting the antiquated pail and hopper closets to water closets. Several small schemes are in hand.

The Housing Act of 1949 is also operating within the Borough and several worth while schemes have been sponsored and completed. Opposition has had to be overcome in connection with building licencing.

The problem of the redundant and worn-out house however remains to be vigorously tackled and the difficulties associated with the demolition and clearing of condemned houses, as illustrated, serves to convince that Slum Clearance Schemes must be reconsidered before our too numerous black spots can be eradicated.

There are numerous pitfalls and stumbling blocks in the path of the official intent on housing improvements, and not the least has been a certain lack of co-operation in or willingness to assume the full responsibilities of the Housing & Public Health Law. Whether from ill-judged advice or pure lethargy it is difficult to assess, but the fact remains that where defaulters are sufficiently stubborn the legal remedies are with-held until the process of enforcement becomes farcial. There are far too many Housing Repair Notices outstanding and in default the necessary works should be completed by the authority, as is laid down. At present the position of your Inspector is quite untenable as recipients of Notices know that these will not be enforced.

It is worthy of note that despite this, the bulk of the rebuilding work reported through the various Committees, Building, Town Planning, Housing, etc., is mainly initiated sponsored and completed through the Inspector, a fact which is often overlooked. Add to this, the supervision of Housing Lists, selection of tenants and checking of complaints and it can be realised that a Sanitary Inspector's duties can be complicated in the extreme.

It is noted with regret that the Housing Committee have agreed to appoint a further Official to duplicate the work now undertaken by your Inspector. In an authority of this size it is difficult to imagine that it is pressure of work alone which could have prompted such a decision.

RESULTS OF HOUSING ACTION TO DATE

Total number of Houses inspected for Categorisation	...	120
Number of Houses fit for habitation or having minor defects only	... ..	91
Number of Houses unfit for habitation, and capable of repair at reasonable cost	... ..	21
Number of Houses unfit for habitation and incapable of repair at reasonable cost	... ..	8
Number of Houses remedied by Informal Action	... ..	36
Number of representations made:-		
(a) for service of Works Notice	... ..	24
(b) for making Demolition or Closing Orders	... ..	18
Number of Notices served	... ..	12
Number of Houses rendered fit	... ..	20
Number of Demolition or Closing Orders	... ..	11
Number of Houses undertaking accepted	... ..	8
Number of Houses demolished	... ..	3
Number of Houses with Sanitary Accommodation, prej. to Health		36
Number of Houses without Separate Sanitary Accommodation		25
Number of Houses without sufficient drains or sinks	... ..	42
Number of Houses provided with new W.C.'s. and sinks	... ..	38

SURVEY OF COUNCIL ESTATE

The Council control Estates including:-

120	Pre-War Houses,
98	Post-War Houses,
8	Converted Huts at Royal Oak Camp,
6	Corporate Properties,
2	Requisitioned Properties.
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234	Dwellings

There is very little overcrowding over the Estate managed by the Corporation, only 35 houses being sublet and these mainly to relatives. A further 8 houses have only a single occupant. This position has been reached by a system of transfers of tenancies and a marked standard of co-operation with the tenants has enabled complicated exchanges to be completed. In one case four families obtained improved accommodation at the cost of one new house.

HOUSING

RECONDITIONING OR CLEARANCE ?



Bad arrangements and sanitary defects combine to warrant consideration for clearance en bloc.



Examples of isolated unfit " dwellings " already scheduled—
but remaining occupied



The rate of disrepair is alarmingly progressive due mainly to the uneconomic rents. Re-housing has, as yet, only touched the fringe of this problem.

Certain courts yet remain to be treated.
The basic disadvantages of lack of air space and light are well seen.

SECTION E

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD AND DRINK.

Standards of cleanliness remain at a low level throughout the trade and lack of attention to the elements of hygiene is causing concern.

Handlers of food which is consumed raw or which is twice cooked before consumption are constantly warned of the risks, but progress towards wholesome food handling is desperately slow.

Far too many premises still lack the elementary facilities of hot and cold water, soap, and clean towels. These mainly consist of hotels, public houses, transport cafes, etc. Representations have been made to the various traders concerned as yet without success. A number of general shops are inadequately lighted and are in a poor state of repair rendering them difficult to be kept clean.

Four food premises were re-conditioned voluntarily during the year.

DETAILS OF FOOD SURRENDERED.

FOOD	Amount in lbs.
Tinned Meat Loaf	21
Tinned Chopped Pork	13
Tinned Milk	78
Tinned Beans	12
Tinned Peas	5
Tinned Fruit	25
Tinned Tomatoes	8
Tinned Fish	1
Paste	2
Pickles	2
Fruit Jam	3
Jam, Syrup etc.	10
Tinned Soup	3
Tinned Spaghetti	7
Coffee	3
Biscuits	10
Eggs (shell)	15 doz.
Eggs (whole frozen)	112
Fruit, Pears	28
Cheese	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Ham	13 $\frac{1}{2}$
Pork	120
Pork Sausage	14
Bacon	38
Haddock	28
Halibut	13 $\frac{1}{2}$
Crabs	14
Roe	14

Meat and Food Inspection

Inspection of Meat:-

Visits to Slaughterhouses	...	...	...	...	6
Visits to Shops and Stalls	...	...	...	...	12
Visits to other Premises	...	...	...	...	14
Total Meat Inspection Visits		...	...	...	32

Visits to:-

Butchers	...	...	...	...	38
Fishmongers and Poulterers	...	...	...	...	25
Grocers	...	...	...	...	65
Greengrocers and Fruiterers	...	...	...	...
Cowsheds	...	...	...	...	2
Dairies and Milkshops	...	...	...	...	8
Ice-Cream Premises	...	...	...	...	12
Food Preparing Premises	...	...	...	...	1
Market Stalls	...	...	...	...	-
Restaurants, Cafes, etc.	...	...	...	...	28
Street Vendors and Hawkers' Carts	...	...	...	...	2

Visits in connection with Sampling:-

Milk - Bacteriological	...	...	...	...	2
Milk - Tubercle Bacilli	2

Miscellaneous Food Visits:-

Including Cysticus Bovis	12
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TOTALS ... 1377

Notices Served

No. of Informal Notices Served	28
No. of Informal Notices Complied with	12
No. of Statutory Notices Served	...	...	...	...	16
No. of Statutory Notices Complied with	...	...	...	...	10
					66

SECTION F.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S VISITS AND NOTICES SERVED DURING THE YEAR ENDING 31/12/50.

General Sanitation

Nature of Visit or Inspection:-

Water Supply	...	...	...	...	...	23
Drainage	...	...	...	...	...	104
Stables and Piggeries	...	...	...	...	...	4
Fried Fish Shops	...	...	...	...	...	4
Tents, Vans and Sheds	...	...	...	...	...	8
Factories	...	...	...	...	...	28
Bakehouses	...	...	...	...	...	12
Public Conveniences	...	...	...	...	...	2
Theatres and Places of Entertainment	...	...	...	...	...	2
Refuse Collection	...	...	...	...	...	12
Refuse Disposal	...	...	...	...	...	10
Rats and Mice	...	...	...	...	...	41
Schools	...	...	...	...	...	12
Shops	...	...	...	...	...	33
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	...	...	...	...	...	101
Petroleum Acts	...	...	...	...	...	12
Markets	...	...	...	...	...	1
Burial of Dead	...	...	...	...	...	-

Housing

Under Public Health Acts:-

Number of Houses Inspected	...	...	...	128
Other Visits Paid to above Houses	...	...	...	14

Under Housing Acts:-

Number of Houses Inspected	...	...	...	114
Visits Paid to above Houses	...	...	...	87

Overcrowding:-

Number of Houses Inspected	...	...	...	226
Visits Paid to above Houses	...	...	...	140

Verminous Premises:-

Number of Houses Inspected	3
Visits Paid to above Houses	2

Miscellaneous Housing Visits	8
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Infectious Diseases

Inquiries in Cases of I.D.	4
Visits re Disinfection	8
Miscellaneous Infectious Disease Visits	5

SECTION G

Prevalence and Control Over Infections, etc.

Erysipelas	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Scarlet Fever	...	...	...	...	...	...	3 cases
Whooping Cough	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Influenzal Pneumonia	...	...	...	...	...	...	Nil
Anterior Poliomyelitis	...	...	...	...	...	...	2 cases

The two poliomyelitis cases were closely checked and the investigations revealed no connection between them. The Ministry of Health hoped that the first case might prove a useful pointer if it could be utilised to reveal the mode of spread of this infection. The case was closely examined and the results of the field work were negative insomuch as the case has travelled and visited extensively outside the district within the presumed incubation period.

The second case within the Borough however, confirmed the opinion that the disease may be spread by "carriers" who do not exhibit the fullest symptoms. Both cases are recovering.

Tuberculosis	2 cases
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The two cases reported were both Pulmonary, one male and one female.

FOOD POISONING :-

Food and Drugs Act 1938.

There were no cases of food poisoning reported during the year.

VACCINATION.

	Under 1.	1 - 4.	5 - 14.	15 or over	Total
Primary	1	1	-	-	2
Re-Vaccination	-	-	-	1	1

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

	Under 5.	5 - 14.	Total	Booster.				
	12	2	14	6				
Age at 31.12.50	Under 1	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	Total
i.e. Born in Year	1950	1949	1948	1947	1946	1941-45	1936-40	Under 15
	-	30	39	56	42	205	230	602

